

CAROL OKADA

Hawaii Department of Agriculture

Carol Okada is currently working on Hawaii's Biosecurity Program under the direction of the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

Ms. Okada graduated from the University of Hawaii at Manoa with a Bachelors of Science degree in Horticulture. She joined the Hawaii Department of Agriculture as a Plant Quarantine Inspector in 1986 and was promoted to Plant Specialist in 1990, where she provided technical expertise in Hawaii Orchid Growers' Association versus the United States Department of Agriculture litigation, on the issues of: 1) federal preemption; 2) orchid pests and diseases; and 3) states ability to inspect and quarantine commodities of foreign origin.

She also worked directly with state's legal counsel, USDA's FOIA office, and USDA's Biotechnology Regulatory Services in Riverdale, Maryland on a biotech litigation involving state's ability to protect confidential business information.

In 2000, Ms. Okada planned, implemented, and supervised Maui's Kahului Airport Risk Assessment. The risk assessment, which was mandated by the FAA Record of Decision, studied the movement of alien invasive species from the continental United States and foreign areas to Kahului Airport. The Kahului Airport Pest Risk Assessment involved intensive inspections of all baggage by inspectors and detector dog teams; inspections of aircraft cabins and cargo holds, and 100% inspections of agricultural products shipped by air cargo.

Ms. Okada was promoted to Maritime Supervisor in 2004 and to Manager in 2005. During this time, she was the state's expert witness on invasive species impacts and mitigation measures for the Hawaii SuperFerry litigation.

As manager of the statewide branch with six (6) port offices, responsibilities include: supervision of inspectors, staff, programs, implementation of the Biosecurity program, legislative coordination, program funding, industry analysis, County and Federal coordination, and pest management programs. In addition, she chaired the Coordinating Group of Alien Pest Species (2011-2012), and the Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC) Prevention Working Group. She has worked in the following areas:

- Statewide port evaluations to evaluate staff, determine invasive species pathways and risks, and provide recommended mitigation measures and worked with USDA on the *"Pathway Analysis of Invasive Species Introduction into the State of Hawaii"*
- Emergency preparedness plans to interdict introductions of animal and plant pests
- Planning and preliminary design for proposed "joint-use" inspection facilities
- User fees to fund the implementation of the Biosecurity program.
- Commodity assessments to determine risk level of imported agricultural imports; and import replacement program to replace high-risk imports
- Rapid and accurate identification of potential pests arriving in Hawaii to be accessible via the Barcode of Life Data System
- Pest Management programs, which combines field pest management practices and inspection/postharvest treatment into a unified system to produce pest-free products